

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
July 21, 2022
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Carol A. Fachini, Michael G. Denault, and Pamela Tworig.

Brandon Field was not present.

Visitors: Robert Briggs, Carolyn Brooks, Beth Phelps, Deborah Righi, James Righi, Tyna Senecal, and Natalie York.

Luke McKay, Dog Officer.

David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.

William Levine, Emergency Management Director.

Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. Additional correspondence was added to the agenda. There were no changes to its order.

HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Robert Briggs gave an update on the high-speed fiber optic network. The town will receive a copy of the audit which was just completed on the Deerfield Valley Communications Union District. The CUD received a \$21.9 million grant for construction which should span 24 months. They are working with the Stamford Fire Department to build a box to hold their infrastructure. All homes in town will be part of the network. Nancy Bushika thanked him for being the liaison and fighting to make this happen on behalf of the town.

2. Tyna Senecal spoke to the board about the library's storage problem. They would like to install a small shed. The library wants to offer non-reading activities, such as being able to rent snowshoes this winter. Dave Tatro thought the best place would be on the other side of the fence so it wouldn't be in the way of snow plowing. Pam Tworig suggested removing the shrubs against the north wall of the town office and putting it there. Since the town office also has a space/storage issue, perhaps the library and town could work together and share the space.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of July 7, 2022 as written.

SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #27 \$ 7,273.67 payroll

WARRANT #28 \$77,075.50 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

The Selectboard was given financial statements for the first six months. The treasurer is willing to answer any questions they have.

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The road crew has been working on the Lincoln Road project. It should last another six weeks. The detour has been completed and is working fine.
2. Dave Tatro advised that the roadside mowing is completed.
3. The road crew has continued to grade roads in between the Lincoln Road bridge work.

RECYCLING

1. Carol Fachini is happy with the new position and the recycling center is working well.
2. The Household Hazardous Waste Day will be July 23, 2022 at the AOT garage in Heartwellville.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine attended the recent Massachusetts Regional Emergency Planning Commission meeting. They have set up cooling centers in Adams, Williamstown and North Adams. We may have to consider setting up one here.
2. The REPC has an abundance of cleaning supplies and Tyvek suits.
3. The REPC is working toward FEMA certified Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) to assist. The ideal volunteer is someone who is not already affiliated with emergency response such as emergency management, the fire department or highway department. This group will assist with the set up and organization of the shelter and see to the people's needs during an emergency. FEMA's warehouse is overstocked and they will offer a lot of material support for groups that are trained and certified.
4. Vermont's Regional Emergency Group has been unable to elect officers because they haven't had enough people attend the meetings to make a quorum.

DELINQUENT DOG UPDATE

1. Several people have come in to license their dogs. There are 13 people who have not. Luke McKay stated that he usually serves the tickets in hand accompanied by sheriff. Many people are not home in the day and the tickets have to be mailed. He suggested saving time and money by mailing all the tickets. Nancy Bushika suggested including a letter with the ticket. MOTION by Mike Denault to mail out all of the tickets. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.
2. Luke McKay plans to buy some paint and freshen up the dog kennel.

INVESTMENT/FINANCE POLICY

The board reviewed the policy and made some changes. They will review the updated draft at the next meeting.

TENNIS COURT

Nancy Bushika noted that there are some large cracks and sections where the pavement is raised that could present a tripping hazard. The board discussed that groups in town should clean up areas they have used when they stop meeting or functioning. Nancy Bushika felt this stipulation should be included when a group is formed.

SMOKING POLICY

The Selectboard reviewed this policy from 1997 and the terminology used with smoking and tobacco products. They agreed to add vaping to the policy.

CANNABIS

The Selectboard discussed setting a date for a special town meeting so the town could vote whether to allow retail cannabis in town. They weighed the costs of holding a special meeting in August or holding the vote at the same time as the November election. The board would like to implement a local option tax on all cannabis sales but learned the town would have to tax all businesses the same; they cannot just tax cannabis sales. The board has contacted the state for more information and is waiting for a response.

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve and sign the warning as revised. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

The special town meeting and informational meeting will be Monday, August 22, 2022 at 7 p.m. and voting will take place on Tuesday, August 23, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

POLICY REGARDING INTEREST ON OVERPAYMENT OR OVERCHARGE OF TAXES

The board signed the Policy regarding Interest on Overpayment or Overcharge of Taxes which was approved at the last meeting.

SNOW AND ICE POLICY

The board signed the Snow and Ice Policy which was approved at the last meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Pam Tworig said she has received many complaints about a camp that was allowed in a residential zone that should not have been allowed without an approved septic system. Mike Denault feels it's fine to discuss a problem with our Zoning By-laws, but if she is talking about the performance of an employee, it should be brought up during executive session.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Mike Denault talked to the Bennington Sheriff's Department about some of the problems that have happened in town recently and the inability to reach the state police or even get a call back. He asked if the board should consider contacting our representative. Bill Levine said he learned at a recent candidate meet and greet at the library that the state police are very short staffed. Many in the room were not aware that a candidate meet and greet was held.
2. Nancy Bushika stated that she has not received a response from the principal to use the school for meetings when the town office is overcrowded. She will follow up.
3. Deb Burchard asked if the Selectboard has any questions they can provide before the Planning Commission meeting so she can have answers ready.
4. Dan Potvin submitted a letter of interest to be appointed on the Selectboard once Brandon Field resigns. Pam Tworig said at the last meeting everyone agreed they would not appoint anyone. Mike Denault recalled saying that it was an option to remain a four person board, but it was not a decision. After much discussion, the board will wait until it receives Brandon Field's resignation.
5. Nancy Bushika would like to attend the Government Financial Overview for Selectboard Members webinar that will be held on July 28, 2022.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Carol Fachini to find that premature public discussion of employee matters would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. 3 in favor (Mike Denault did not vote). Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Carol Fachini to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to 1

V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. 3 in favor (Mike Denault did not vote). Motion APPROVED. The Selectboard entered executive session at 8:50 p.m. Lori Shepard was invited to participate.

MOTION by Mike Denault to exit executive session. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 10:10 p.m. No action was taken.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to adjourn. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini, Clerk

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REMINDERS

1. The primary election will be held on Tuesday, August 9, 2022 at the Stamford Elementary School Community Room from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
2. A special town meeting and informational meeting will be held on Monday, August 22, 2022 at 7 p.m. with voting on Tuesday, August 23, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The matter to be decided is whether to institute a local option tax on businesses and whether to allow cannabis retailers and the retail portions of integrated licensee establishments in town.
3. Applications for addition to the checklist will be accepted during regular town office hours and throughout election day. Forms can be obtained at the town office or you can register to vote through Vermont's online voter registration system at <https://olvr.vermont.gov/>.
4. Absentee ballots will be available until 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 8, 2022. Please call the town office at 802-694-1361.
5. The next free Household Hazardous Waste Day will be July 23, 2022 at the AOT garage in Heartwellville.